

News Release - Ontario Providing Support for Downtown Ottawa Businesses

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NEWS RELEASE

Ontario Providing Support for Downtown Ottawa Businesses

Funding available for small businesses affected by weeks-long demonstrations

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[Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries](#)

OTTAWA — The Ontario government is providing up to \$11.5 million to local businesses in Ottawa impacted by the nearly four-week long occupation near Parliament Hill in January and February 2022. This funding will also help Ottawa restore consumer confidence and welcome people back to the nation's capital.

The funding includes a \$10-million grant, which will be administered by [Invest Ottawa](#), to help get money into the hands of businesses quickly. Eligible Ottawa businesses can apply for grants of up to \$5,000 to help pay for non-deferrable operating expenses incurred during the blockade. More information on the application process and eligibility criteria will be available soon on the Invest Ottawa website.

"The illegal blockades in downtown Ottawa this winter caused significant financial losses for local businesses," said Lisa MacLeod, Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries. "Our government is supporting small businesses and entrepreneurs by providing the relief they need to recover quickly. Today's announcement will help Ottawa — and the small businesses at the heart of our community — get ready to welcome visitors for the spring and summer tourist seasons."

"For weeks, the city of Ottawa was under siege from an illegal blockade, impacting business owners and workers through no fault of their own," said Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance. "Our government has always stood with hard-working Ontario small business owners, and we have committed to supporting the City of Ottawa and to helping businesses recover."

The government is also investing \$1.5 million in [Ottawa Tourism](#), helping Ottawa reinforce its brand as a world-class city while encouraging visitor and tourism spending in the National Capital Region. Ottawa Tourism will launch a campaign that inspires consumer confidence and encourages tourists and visitors to come to Ottawa to enjoy the peak spring and summer seasons.

"Ottawa is our country's capital, and one of Ontario's key tourism gateway cities. Many out-of-province visitors begin or end their visit to Ontario in the National Capital Region," said Minister

MacLeod. "We are sending a strong signal that the nation's capital is open for business and ready to welcome the world to Ontario."

Quick Facts

- Invest Ottawa, a not-for-profit organization, is collaborating with key partners in the Ottawa region, including the Ottawa Board of Trade and the Ottawa Coalition of Business Improvement Areas to deliver this support so eligible businesses can access support.
- Ottawa Tourism works with more than 450 tourism-related member businesses to profile Ottawa and the National Capital Region as a diverse place to visit or host major meetings and events.
- Tourism in the National Capital Region is important to Ontario's economy. In 2019, visitor spending in the Ottawa area generated more than \$2.5 billion.

Quotes

"Small businesses, and our neighbours who run them, are an integral part of our community, which is why our government continues to step up when and where they need support. We are delivering this funding to support their resilience so Ottawa remains an attractive destination for anyone wishing to experience our incredible national capital."

- Dr. Merrilee Fullerton
MPP for Kanata—Carleton

"This \$10 million investment will encourage more people to get out and support their local small businesses. Restoring consumer confidence is a key part of our recovery and today's announcement is a clear sign that Ottawa is back in business."

- Jeremy Roberts
MPP for Ottawa West—Nepean

"This funding is welcome news for the small businesses that were affected by the four-week-long demonstration. COVID-19 has pushed small businesses to their limit, and our government has stepped up to show their commitment to struggling business owners who were impacted by recent events."

- Goldie Ghamari
MPP for Carleton

"We extend sincere thanks to the Government of Ontario for this critical support of businesses negatively impacted by recent demonstrations in Ottawa's downtown core. These companies make a critical contribution to our community and economy. This funding will help these entrepreneurs and owners to recover, continue building their business and driving our economic recovery."

- Michael Tremblay
President and CEO, Invest Ottawa

"Ottawa Tourism is grateful for this support from the Ontario government, which will help our tourism businesses get back to what they do best: welcoming visitors and showcasing the incredible experiences that can be had in our region. Tourism has a major role to play in the recovery of our community; in the short term, we encourage Ottawans to support the downtown as we resume our role as a welcoming, safe, inclusive destination."

- Michael Crockatt
President and CEO, Ottawa Tourism

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